

Leave a Trace by Krowshi

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Alternate Universe - Soulmates, Fluff and Angst, M/M, Soulmate-Identifying Marks, this is a wild emotion trip for the whole family

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-01-11

Updated: 2018-01-11

Packaged: 2022-04-03 15:21:06

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,098

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

“It’s kind of poetic, Mike,” his mom once said after one of his rants about his marks. “Your soul marks begin to grow and expand along your body the more in touch you get to be with your soulmate. Maybe one day you will have full grown wings that will allow you to protect your most desired.”

Leave a Trace

Author's Note:

Kind of based off this prompt I found on Tumblr, but I twisted it some bc uwu I'm too weak to hurt these boys.

As an artist, Will Byers often felt inclined to find meaning in things around him, not just his art. He would wonder the significance of why the local little old lady on the corner of Oak & 10th would grow sunflowers and only sunflowers. Was it just her favorite flower? Was there a deeper meaning to it all in general? Was it a relaxation thing to remind her that even on days that weren't sunny, life wasn't as depressing as it should be? Whatever the reason, it's all the same questions he had buzzing around in his head about the tattoo that started out as tiny little buds along his collar bone.

What was its significance? Why flowers?

Mike Wheeler, who was all determination and an unstoppable force once his mind was set, had also come to slow down the pace to contemplate the markings that began at the points of his shoulder blades. Why was he stuck with tiny little baby bird wings? He would think in passing as he would twist his body in the bathroom almost painfully to glare at what was offending him. He took them as a sign of weakness.

"It's kind of poetic, Mike," his mom once said after one of his rants about them. "Your soul marks begin to grow and expand along your body the more in touch you get to be with your soulmate. Maybe one day you will have full grown wings that will allow you to protect your most desired."

It was after that, that Mike's perspective changed.

And it was after he had met Will Byers on the school playground in Kindergarten that his attitude took the full 180.

Years of spending days and days with Will did his wings start to

spread, creeping up his shoulder blades and around the curve of his arms, painting him like a brilliant bird in the sky. It made him curious what Will's tattoo was growing into, but the smaller boy was always so bashful, so timid about many things. Part of him wished to conquer that part of Will, to earn the complete and unconditional trust of his friend - his soulmate - because he knew, he knew that before Dustin and Lucas came along, his wings had been growing even before that.

It was on a day of no D&D sessions - before Will disappeared - that the smaller boy finally relented and let Mike see the garden that decorated Will's body.

They started small at his collar bone, obviously where the tattoo started, and crept down around his arms like vines and poured over down his back like a hanging basket. Mike traced his fingers along them despite Will's bashful protests that it tickled - Mike didn't care. He was too entranced.

It wasn't very long before Mike had also abandoned his own shirt, showing the wings that often times would peak out the ends of any short sleeved shirts he would wear. Will turned to gaze at them and the visible bob in his throat clashed with his awe struck eyes. The taller male always knew Will had an eye for the finer things in life. Not... materialistic things like riches, but things that other people often took for granted and didn't attempt to look deeper into and he could tell Will was formulating so many thoughts in his head right now.

"They're so beautiful, Mike," Will said finally after a beat. The darker haired boy smiled softly and crawled closer to Will, wrapping him in his arms and pressing close to the one who felt so right, fit so perfectly, in his arms.

That whole picture had been poetic in and of its own. A guardian angel protecting his garden.

But then that day happened. That sick and twisted day where something and everything felt wrong and that hopes that Will was safe hung in the back of the whole parties heads - not just Joyce's or Jonathan's or *Mike's*.

And as the days continued to tick by without Will, Mike began to notice his tattoo begin to flicker in and out of itself like a bad glitch or the lights that Joyce had become so invested in. Some nights he would cry over it and it was more often than he would like to admit that Eleven would find him in his reverted back to a snot-nosed 5-year-old state. He never lost his determination though, even if no one else believed Will was still alive, the flickering marks on his back screamed at him otherwise and he would never ever give up on Will and if he ever did, he'd best be good as dead he thought.

It was on the last and final night with Will stuck in the upside down that the tattoo had almost completely disappeared, only flashing up occasionally like the slow transitions of a stop light or a steady heartbeat. Mike never felt so low in his life, but he had to busy himself with the issues at hand what with all Dr. Brenner and his crew tracking them down like dog catchers and the demogorgon appearing.

But when he woke up one morning, his mom shaking him from an already stressful sleep, he cried tears of happiness at not only the news of his soulmate making it back home, but when he got ready that morning to go see Will at the hospital, his wings returned dark and full and *strong*.

And a second set started to grow out from the base of the first and curled their way down his side's.

And seeing Will - his garden - alive and well for the first time in so long swung him back into his deep emotions that dug into his heart and made him feel on top of the world.

And seeing the flowers, bright and significant, now grown down to his thighs just burned everything brighter because no matter how exhausted he looked he was still so amazing.

When he got time with the smaller boy by himself for once, he breathed a mantra of "I love you, I love you, I love you, I missed you, you're so beautiful, *I love you*," like his life depended on it. He cradled Will's head in his hands as he did, longer fingers warm and protective against the boy he loved and his forehead pressed close in a desperate act of staying grounded.

He never wanted to experience the flicker of his wings again and he wasn't going to count on it until he died. Not when they held so much significance and meaning to him.